

National Commitments to SDG Transformation: 2024 Update

1. Name of country: Botswana
2. Please provide a **short update on the steps taken, progress made and/or lessons learned in implementing each of the National Commitments to SDG Transformation** announced by your country in conjunction with the 2023 SDG Summit:¹

Name of Commitment: National Commitment for Adolescent Well-Being in Botswana	Contact person: Mr Batho Christopher Molomo
Brief description of steps taken on implementation, progress made and/or lessons learned:	
<p>1.0 Introduction</p> <p><i>Botswana's National Commitment for Adolescent Well-Being is a comprehensive initiative aimed at ensuring that every adolescent and young people (AYP) in the country have the opportunity to thrive and reach their full potential. Grounded in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the principle of "Leaving No One Behind," this commitment addresses the multifaceted needs of adolescents through inclusive and equitable policies. By prioritizing health, education, safety, and economic opportunities, Botswana aims to create an environment where all young people, regardless of their background or circumstances, can flourish and contribute meaningfully to their communities and the nation's development.</i></p> <p><i>The National Commitment was officially launched, by His Excellency Dr. Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi, the President of the Republic of Botswana, on the 10th of October 2023. His involvement reflects the highest level of political support and the recognition that the future of Botswana is inherently tied to the well-being and empowerment of its youth. Since the launch, various Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) have commenced the implementation of the strategies embedded in the blueprint. These efforts include accelerating education and skills development programs, enhancing health and nutrition services, addressing gender-based violence, promoting road safety, and fostering employability and job creation for adolescents.</i></p> <p><i>This report marks the first update on the implementation of the National Commitment for Adolescent Wellbeing since its development and launch in 2023. The report highlights significant strides in various areas, thanks to the concerted efforts of all stakeholders involved. This update not only provides a comprehensive overview of the progress made but also underscores the lessons learned. It serves as a testament to the country's collective dedication to enhancing the health, education, and overall well-being of adolescents in Botswana.</i></p>	

¹ All submitted commitments are available at <https://sdgs.un.org/SDGSummitActions/National>

2.0 Implementation Update

2.1 Policy/Programme Commitment Theme 1: Accelerate Education and Skills Development



2.1.1 Accelerate the strategic shift to the competency-based curriculum and e-assessment in schools. This will include the digitalization of teaching, learning and e-assessment, which are an integral part of curriculum development in the digital era. The competency-based curriculum focuses on developing practical technical and soft skills critical for success in the globally competitive labour market.

- Botswana is currently reforming its education system to support the transition from a resource-based to a knowledge-based economy. Key programs are in place to facilitate this transformation, including the implementation of the Education and Training Sector Strategic Plan 2015-2020 (ETSSP). Additionally, the country, through Ministry of Education, is developing the General Education Curriculum and Assessment Framework, as well as the National Policy on Assessment for General Education and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).
- The Botswana Examinations Council (BEC) is currently digitizing its assessment processes and services. The Council has established an online registration system for both junior and senior secondary education. Additionally, they have implemented e-authorization of assessment instruments and e-marking.

2.1.2 Accelerate the implementation of the Revised National School Health Policy, ensuring that adolescent nutrition is adequately covered.

- Botswana has developed a National School Health Policy (NSHP), which has been operational since 2010. This policy emphasizes the right of all learners to access quality health, education, and social services, regardless of gender, disability, or location. The goal of the NSHP is to achieve improved educational outcomes, health, and well-being for all learners and the school community. The policy is currently under review and awaiting approval. To facilitate the implementation of the revised policy, an implementation plan has been developed and is also awaiting endorsement.
- To enhance the quality of health among adolescents in schools, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), in collaboration with the World Health Organisation (WHO), has supported the Government of Botswana in implementing the Global Standards for Health Promoting Schools. This initiative provides a resource package aimed at improving the health and well-being of school-aged children and adolescents. The standards are designed to create schools that foster both education and health, equipping students with the knowledge and skills necessary for their future health, well-being, employability, and life prospects. Based on these global standards, the resource package ensures that all schools promote life skills, cognitive and socio-emotional skills, and healthy lifestyles for all learners. This initiative has been piloted in three schools, each of which has

established a Health Promoting School Coordinating Committee, comprising both school and community members, and developed operational plans. Capacity-building workshops have also been held for student leaders.

- *The Government of Botswana (GoB) recognizes the critical role of food, nutrition, and education in human development. This commitment is evidenced by the availability of a school feeding program in all public schools. The program has been enhanced to include green produce consumption, improving its effectiveness and efficiency in meeting the broader nutritional and economic needs of school-going children. Currently, the guidelines for secondary schools are being reviewed, and new guidelines for primary schools are being developed.*

2.1.3 Accelerate implementation of the ESA Commitment and its nine elements on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE), as well as SRHR interventions, as high impact initiatives. In this regard, pay particular attention to AYP in marginalised communities and sustain ongoing digital initiatives and virtual outreach led by young women and men at district level.

- *To accelerate the implementation of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) services, Botswana has developed several key frameworks and policies. These include the Botswana National Life Skills Framework, the Revised National Policy on Education, the National Strategic Framework (NSF II) for HIV and AIDS, and the School Health Policy.*

2.1.4 Establish and scale up learning resource centers (LRCs) in schools and one stop centers (OSCs) in communities. The LRCs and OSCs would provide AYP, including those with disabilities, the special support they require for their emotional, mental, and physical well-being. Specialist teachers in the fields of special education, guidance and counselling would provide holistic and comprehensive support to enable AYP to attain the set learning and developmental outcomes.

- *The Ministry of Education and Skills Development (MESD) has decentralized the Department of Learner Support Services to all regions in the country. This Department encompasses guidance and counselling as well as special education. At the secondary level, schools are staffed with qualified Guidance and Counselling teachers and special education teachers. At the primary level, there are Guidance and Counselling teachers and Heads of Department to provide both counselling and psychosocial support.*

The MESD has established forty-three (43) inclusive resource centers for special education in junior secondary schools, five (5) special education units for learners with vision impairments, and seven (7) units for hearing impairments across different parts of the country. Additionally, the MESD has constructed the Maun Centre for Special Education Learners, which caters for those with profound intellectual and special disabilities. The development of the centre's curriculum is being finalized, and staff recruitment is ongoing.

2.1.5 Develop digital monitoring tools to capture data on learners with special needs and of all dropouts including due to pregnancy

- *The Ministry of Education and Skills Development (MESD) is in the process of developing the Education Management Information System (EMIS), which will be used to track all school-*

going learners and provide their demographic data, including information on learners with special needs. Although the system is still in its early stages, data is currently being collected using Excel Data Sheets and CS-PRO, which will eventually be integrated into the anticipated EMIS. This initiative is spearheaded by the Department of ICT and Media Services within the MESD.

2.1.6 Facilitate access to digital learning to assist out of school young people to access Botswana Open University (BOU), Junior Secondary Schools (JSS) and Senior Secondary Schools (SSS) programmes.

- The MESD has distributed laptops to all senior secondary school students across the country as part of the government's Reset Agenda to accelerate digitalization. The Ministry has initiated the implementation of a three-phase School Digitalization Plan to transform education delivery through the integration of ICT in teaching and learning. With the support of SmartBots, schools are being connected to high-speed internet, which is essential for improving access for both teachers and learners. Additionally, educational television programs covering the Botswana General Certificate of Secondary Education (BGCSE) curriculum are being provided and are readily accessible to out-of-school youth through television platforms.

2.1.7 Strengthen and scale up the holistic approach to skills development of AYP that includes mind-set change; CSE and life skills; social-emotional intelligence and resilience; entrepreneurship; digital literacy and use stand-alone, infusion, integration, and mainstreaming interventions across co-curricular as well as parent child communication to elevate and strengthen the voices of AYP.

- Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) has been incorporated into the school curriculum and is a component of the guidance and counselling program in all public schools. This program has also been adopted by several private schools. At the primary school level, CSE is integrated into subjects such as cultural studies, biology, and religious and moral education.
- UNESCO, in partnership with Women Against Rape (WAR), has implemented the Parent-Child Communication Manual. Through this program, parents and caregivers have been trained on effective communication with their children. The capacity-building workshops focused on strategies for engaging in meaningful discussions, particularly on topics such as sexual and reproductive health, gender-based violence, HIV, and child marriages.
- Botswana is also implementing the "Connect with Respect" program within the education system. "Connect with Respect" is a classroom-based gender violence prevention program designed for young people aged 12-19 years.

2.1.8 Scale up capacity building and continuous professional development (CPD) of school teachers and supporting personnel on CSE. Incorporate CSE in tertiary education and health training institutions in alignment with standards developed for the CPD to protect AYP learners from institutions offering non accredited courses.

- Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) capacity-building initiatives have been conducted for both in-service and pre-service teachers. For in-service teachers, two training workshops have been held, training a total of 103 guidance and counselling and special education teachers in CSE. Additionally, 78 pre-service teachers have also received training in CSE.

2.2 Policy/Programme Commitment Theme 2: Promotion of Health and Nutrition



2.2.1 Leverage on the existing Family Planning (FP2030) 12 commitment to address unintended and unwanted pregnancies among AYP in and out of school. This should be complementary to efforts towards strengthening the implementation of the National HIV and AIDS Strategic Framework whose aim is to facilitate HIV prevention among AGYW; condom use among adolescent boys and young men; and voluntary male circumcision.

- In an effort to address unintended and unwanted pregnancies among adolescents, the National AIDS Health Promotion Agency (NAHPA) has partnered with community-based organizations to provide HIV prevention, treatment, care, and support services to adolescents and young people (AYP) throughout the country. Information is disseminated through various communication mediums, including face-to-face interactions, social media platforms (Facebook, X, Instagram), and multimedia platforms such as radio and TV. To date, the community outreach program has reached 16,650 AYP aged 10-24 years, surpassing the target of 13,710. These efforts have been implemented in various districts, including Mahalapye East, Tswapong North and South, Bobirwa, Kweneng East and West, Chobe, South East, Goodhope, Jwaneng, and Okavango.
- For the Month of Youth Against AIDS, from 14th February to the 1st of March, 2024, the Botswana National Youth Council (BNYC) provided training on Comprehensive Sexuality Education and job readiness to both in-school and out-of-school youth. A total of 3,505 youth were reached in the areas of Dukwi, Malelejwe, Mosetse, Tutume, Lepashwe, Kutamogoree, Sebina, Gweta, and Maitengwe.

2.2.2 Revitalize Primary Health Care (PHC) especially at the community level by intentionally providing community members with opportunities to be drivers of health. This includes the meaningful capacity development of young people to be voluntary health workers in the communities where they live and to also engage them as peer educators

- Botswana launched the Operation Triple Zero Strategy on the 11th April, 2024. This strategy aims to achieve HIV treatment targets among children and adolescents in Botswana and close existing treatment gaps. It offers a comprehensive package of interventions designed to strengthen the national response to the specific needs of adolescents living with HIV. The

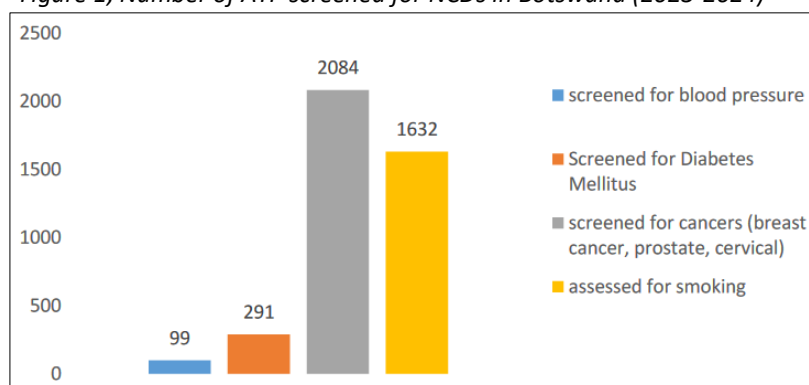
launch provided a youth-friendly platform that included various forms of caregiving and encouraged the participation of young people in community health work.

2.2.3 Provide frequent screening for AYP on commonly occurring Non Communicable Diseases (NCDs) like hypertension and diabetes and integrate these into the national treatment guidelines for AYP. Also provide frequent screening for mental health disorders at primary health centers and refer to the appropriate services promptly.

- Figure 1 illustrates the number of adolescents and young people (AYP) screened for non-communicable diseases (NCDs) during the fiscal year 2023-2024 in Botswana. A total of 2,084 AYP were screened for cancers, including breast, prostate, and cervical cancers, making it the most common screening. This was followed by 1,632 AYP assessed for smoking, and 291 AYP screened for diabetes mellitus. Blood pressure screening was the least common, with only 99 AYP screened.

This comprehensive screening effort highlights Botswana's commitment to addressing the health needs of its AYP. By focusing on NCDs, the country is taking significant steps towards early detection and prevention, which are crucial for reducing the burden of these diseases. Such proactive health initiatives are essential for improving the overall health outcomes and quality of life for Botswana's young population, ensuring they can contribute positively to the nation's future.

Figure 1; Number of AYP screened for NCDs in Botswana (2023-2024)



Source: NAHPA, 2024

2.2.4 Integrate mental health education and literacy within the existing CSE and life skills programmes to effectively mitigate the adversities confronting AYP. Leverage on the already existing health interventions to include mental health awareness and prevention strategies for AYP.

- In an effort to address mental health challenges among adolescents in Botswana, NAHPA has partnered with six community-based organizations to provide mental health services to adolescents and young people (AYP). These organizations are located in Selibe Phikwe, Maun, Gaborone, Palapye, and Mahalapye. To date, the program has successfully reached 597 AYP with mental health services. Efforts are ongoing to extend these services to even more AYP, ensuring that the mental health needs of the youth are met comprehensively across the country.

Meanwhile, a local Non-Governmental Organization called Botswana Family Welfare Association (BOFWA) is leveraging the widespread use of cell phones among youth to implement mental health interventions. BOFWA operates the 16658 Youth Helpline, a multi-communication channel approach that effectively utilizes technology to reach adolescents and young people. The 16658 Youth Helpline provides a comprehensive package of services, including HIV/GBV prevention, STI screening and treatment, family planning, social protection, parenting support, and other services aimed at reducing HIV incidence. This initiative is supported by the Southern African Development Community (SADC) HIV Special Fund Round III.

2.3 Policy/Programme Theme 3: Eliminate Gender-Based Violence



2.3.1 Scale up and expand child friendly policing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to include young people so as to enable them to get effective referrals for medical and psychological support and to build on the progress made to create a national momentum for strengthening the child and youth justice system;

- A comprehensive roadmap for child-friendly justice in Botswana has been developed to guide reforms in the juvenile justice system. The blueprint outlines a comprehensive strategy that includes both immediate and long-term reforms. These reforms involve the development of multi-sectoral standard operating procedures and child-friendly guidelines to facilitate a child-friendly justice system, as well as training and capacity building for the justice sector to implement these processes and legislation. This blueprint was launched in March 2024. Its operationalization has thus commenced. On the other hand, Magistrate courts across Botswana prioritize child-friendly procedures and strive to provide a safe and supportive environment for children involved in legal proceedings.
- Botswana established a national human rights institution through the Ombudsman (Amendment) Act of 2021. This Act, which became operational on the 5th of July, 2023, explicitly confers a human rights mandate on the Office of the Ombudsman in accordance with the Paris Principles. As such, a Human Rights Children's Desk has been established at the Office of the Ombudsman to address complaints regarding children's human rights. This dedicated desk aims to ensure that children's rights are protected and upheld by providing a specialized platform for receiving, investigating, and resolving complaints related to violations of children's rights. The establishment of this desk marks a significant step towards strengthening the protection and advocacy of children's rights in Botswana.
- The Government of Botswana has introduced a criminal legal aid pilot project in Gaborone. This pilot project focuses on providing criminal legal representation for children under 18 years old, in accordance with the Children's Act. The legal aid includes pre-trial representation to support children during their trials, as well as post-trial assistance to help them with appeals.
- The Botswana Police Service (BPS) has developed eight child-friendly centers across different districts in Botswana to strengthen age-sensitive procedures for children in contact with the

law. These centers are located in Gaborone, Francistown, Maun, Letlhakane, Palapye, Ghantsi, Shakawe, and Lobatse. The goal of these facilities is to create a justice system that better meets children's specific needs, facilitates their participation, ensures their privacy, and prevents re-victimization, thereby improving access to justice. These child-friendly centers are planned to be rolled out nationwide. Additionally, there are plans underway to establish two more centers in Phikwe and Kasane as part of this rollout.

- BPS has also developed Child-Friendly Policing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), which were launched in February 2023. To further enhance the police response to gender-based violence (GBV) and ensure seamless, comprehensive referrals, the BPS has also developed SOPs specifically for adolescents and young people. These SOPs provide detailed guidance on contemporary and emerging issues such as drug-facilitated GBV, online GBV, and trafficking in persons. The BPS has further demonstrated its commitment to protecting adolescents and young people from abuse and improving services for all victims of GBV by prioritizing special skills and expertise during recruitment. For example, the BPS now requires minimum qualifications such as Social Work and Psychology for the position of Police Constable.

2.3.2 Support partnerships to end GBV in the family, community, and public and private institutions. At district and local levels, Children's Consultative Forums and village child protection committees will be involved. Equally important is empowering marginalized adolescents to live violence-free lives.

- Members of the Adolescents and Young People Forum (AYPF) in Botswana were part of preparations for the World AIDS Day commemoration held on December 1, 2023, in Nata village. The group led breakout sessions with both male and female students, which included debates and quizzes that facilitated comfortable discussions on topics such as gender-based violence and ways to address it. Additionally, they covered career planning, stress reduction, coping mechanisms, goal mapping, and mindset change.

These sessions enabled young people to express their frustrations and concerns, allowing them to receive appropriate referrals for medical and psychological support, particularly for those emotionally affected by gender-based violence. As a result, justice was more effectively served for the youth.

2.3.3 Strengthen advocacy and community mobilization for the prevention of GBV against Adolescents and Young People (AYP) through public education, mass media and social media.

- Botswana has developed a television docu-drama series titled "Mmueleli Wame." This child-friendly series is designed to educate children under 18 years, in accordance with the Children's Act, about their rights and responsibilities. The series also aims to raise awareness among caregivers—parents, guardians, teachers, and others—about the various issues children face. By presenting these topics through engaging storytelling, "Mmueleli Wame" seeks to empower children with knowledge and provide valuable insights to their caregivers, fostering a more informed and supportive environment for the youth.

Public legal education is also being provided through the production of the "Mmueleli Wame" radio docu-drama series. This program focuses on gender-based violence (GBV) and its effects

on men, women, and children's rights, as well as its impact on children. Through this series, listeners gain valuable insights into the consequences of GBV and the importance of protecting the rights of all individuals, especially the most vulnerable.

- In its mission to provide professional policing services in partnership with the community, the Botswana Police Service (BPS) continues to implement various community policing interventions. These include public education programs in schools, Kgotla meetings, church outreach initiatives, and targeted anti-GBV campaigns. By raising awareness and improving responsiveness through these efforts, the BPS significantly benefits adolescents and young people, ensuring they are better informed about their rights and the support available to them in cases of abuse.

2.4 Policy/Programme Theme 4: Promote Road Safety



2.4.1 Promote transport policies and road designs that enable safe walking, cycling, and public transport, including standardized road-worthy transport. This includes enacting and enforcing legislation to build and protect public spaces including areas around schools. Also, strengthen road safety governance arrangements to ensure that civil society organizations, the academic, business and Adolescent and Young People themselves are engaged in developing and implementing road safety strategy and can better align their own safety needs and activities to the directions being pursued at the national level.

- The Government of Botswana, through the Ministry of Transport and Public Works (Department of Road Transport Services), is committed to promoting safe transport policies, protecting public spaces, and involving diverse stakeholders, including adolescents and young people, in road safety governance and strategy development. This commitment is being implemented through the following measures:

Nationwide Road Safety Awareness Campaigns: To support the creation of safer public spaces and promote safe transport, the Ministry conducts annual nationwide road safety awareness campaigns targeting all road users. These campaigns include specific programs for schools, workplaces, and communities and are aligned with the national commemoration of the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims, which is subsequently commemorated at the district level.

- ✓ **Children Traffic School Initiatives:** To integrate road safety education into school curricula and promote safe walking, cycling, and public transport among young people, the Ministry operates the Children Traffic School in Gaborone city. This initiative is extended to schools outside the city through a mobile Children Traffic School (trucks). Additionally, lower primary schools include road safety education in their Creative and Performing Arts (CAPA) subject, fostering early awareness and understanding of road safety.

- ✓ **Youth Road Safety Programs:** The Ministry rolls out various youth programs such as annual youth conventions, road safety debate activities, scholar patrols, institutional visits, and participatory education techniques. These initiatives engage adolescents and young people in road safety, aligning with the strategy to involve young people in the development and implementation of road safety measures.
 - ✓ **SORSA Initiatives:** The Society of Road Safety Ambassadors (SORSA) is actively implementing the Safe School Going Area (SASSAI) project across the country. District Road Safety Committees have selected two schools in each district to construct walkways and implement other safety measures around school areas. This includes activities such as scholar patrols, institutional visits, and participatory education techniques, aligning with the strategy's focus on school area road safety assessments and improvements.
 - Additionally, the Ministry is developing the 2021-2030 Botswana National Road Safety Strategy that strengthens road safety governance and tasks stakeholders as road safety pillar coordinators (of pillars such as road safety management, road safety safe use, safer vehicles, law enforcement, emergency & trauma services, traffic safety engineering, crash scene management, crash information management, supportive infrastructure, road safety research and etc.).
 - To enhance the safety of public spaces around schools, the Ministry has enacted legislation reducing the speed limit to 30 km/h in school and playground zones, as specified in the Road Traffic Act, Part III. Additionally, there is clear signage for zebra crossings, road strips, and school zones in these areas.
- 2.4.2 Strengthen and scale up the partnership between the Ministry of Transport and Public Works (MTWP), local authorities, MESD, Amend, and the Society of Road Safety Ambassadors (SORSA) on School area Road Safety Assessments and Improvements (SARSAI), to develop localized infrastructure to increase pedestrian safety, road safety lessons in schools, and the development of road safety media campaigns.**
- **National and Local Coordination:** The Ministry of Transport and Public Works (MTWP), in collaboration with the National Road Safety Committee, which includes Government Permanent Secretaries, has established 32 Road Safety Districts. These districts involve various stakeholders, including the District Commissioner, Botswana Police, local authorities, and community members, including young people. These structures have been created to enhance the coordination of road safety efforts across different sectors and levels within the country, directly supporting the strategic goal of strengthening partnerships to achieve safer road use for everyone.
 - **Inclusive Participation Platforms:** MTWP has established several platforms to engage civil society organizations, academic institutions, businesses, and youth in the development and monitoring of road safety strategies. These platforms include the Road Safety Audit Committee, District Road Safety Committees, Children Traffic School, Mobile Traffic School, and public consultations during the review and development of transport and traffic policies and legislation. This approach aligns with the strategy's emphasis on developing localized infrastructure and educational initiatives for young people.

2.4.3 Strengthen government investment in activity mobility initiatives such as cycling and pedestrian walkways modeled on saving lives and reducing road traffic injury

- *The Ministry of Transport and Public Works (MTWP) is developing and implementing infrastructure projects that prioritize safe road designs and public transport facilities. The Botswana Integrated Transport Project (BITP) includes features such as bus lanes, cycling lanes, and walking ramps, integrating road safety considerations into urban planning. This initiative, which has already been rolled out in Gaborone, aims to create walkable, bike-friendly cities to support sustainable living and reduce road traffic injuries.*

2.4.4 Strengthen advocacy and social mobilization by all stakeholders for the Government and partners to prioritize safe movement of all in villages, towns, and cities, and to engage AYP as key stakeholders that help drive responsive policies through meaningful participation in road safety decision making.

- *On the 17th of October, 2018, the Botswana Police Service (BPS) launched the Youth Drivers Outreach Programme to address road safety challenges facing the youth in Botswana. The Programme is executed in collaboration with the youth and aims to encourage the youth to build-in road safety awareness in their daily interactions (be it through social media groups, motor clubs and associations in their different forms), intensify roadside educational activities and sustain collaboration with road safety stakeholders in advocating for good road user behavior by the youth. The programme leverages the strengths of existing structures such as youth associations, motor clubs, school teachers, traditional leadership, business leaders, and funders. Other road safety initiatives include; the “Target 80,000” programme which aims to engage with 80,000 young drivers annually to share road safety tips, focusing on education rather than penalization for violations, community engagements through the annual “Sixty Days of Action on Crime and Road Safety” campaign, partnerships with schools, joint stakeholder educational campaigns under Pillar-4 (Safe Road Users) of the second Decade of Action for Road Safety (2021-2030), and reaching out to the youth through workshops, media, organisation visitations, and Kgotla (traditional platform) meetings.*
- *The Ministry of Transport and Public Works (MTWP) has implemented an annual stakeholder engagement plan, which includes quarterly meetings by the National Road Safety Committee (NRSC) to review progress, address challenges, and plan future road safety activities. These engagements aim to strengthen advocacy and social mobilization among all stakeholders, ensuring that the government and its partners prioritize the safe movement of individuals in villages, towns, and cities across Botswana. Furthermore, these engagements focus on actively involving adolescents and young people as key stakeholders, promoting their meaningful participation in road safety decision-making processes, and helping to drive responsive policies.*

2.5 Policy/Programme Theme 5: Strengthen Skills Development, Employability and Job Creation



2.5.1 Reform the agricultural sector to make it more attractive to adolescents and youth through digital transformation and integration of technology into the agricultural sector.

- *The Ministry of Agriculture has recently launched two agricultural programs, Thuo-Letlotlo and Temo-Letlotlo. These programs have been designed to assign the technological aspects and services to young people. For example, the operation of Baits Café licenses has been exclusively entrusted to the youth, the development of a one-stop service system for the Ministry has been assigned to young individuals, and the use of drones at the Pandamatenga and Selibe Phikwe citrus projects has been deliberately allocated to young people.*

2.5.2 Accelerate the implementation and roll-out of the Generation Unlimited (GenU) initiative focused on the skilling, entrepreneurship and fostering of social impact opportunities for AYP country-wide, including those in rural areas.

- *To date, the GenU team in Botswana has conducted Employability Training in 13 locations across the country. The team reached a total of 4,830 young people, including 3,100 through physical engagement and 1,730 virtually, aged 18-35 years (inclusive of adolescents and young people (AYP)). The aim was to impart soft skills to job seekers to enhance their employability. This initiative has not only increased their knowledge about GenU but also introduced them to GenU platforms like the Youth Marketplace (YOMA), motivating them to take advantage of existing opportunities designed to help youth advance their employability. On the other hand, Ministry of Entrepreneurship, in collaboration with GenU, has trained ninety-five (95) youth in entrepreneurial mindset and economic inclusion. **The following are GenU Youth Employability Training and Tour Objectives***

- *To increase GenU engagement and exposure amongst young people in Botswana across the country.*
- *To boost existing Employability Training for young people in other parts of the country i.e. preparing for the Job market, CV writing, interviews, and entrepreneurship skills*
- *To educate and register young people on digital platforms such as Botswana Labour Market Observatory System (LMO), Yoma (a digital platform where young people can develop their skills, find opportunities, and achieve social and environmental impact) and others, to improve their job readiness as well as give them a crash course of digital literacy.*
- *To empower and engage young people in gaining a comprehensive understanding of digital innovation and the abundant opportunities it offers, fostering their ability to adapt, create, and thrive in an increasingly digital world.*
- *To link young people to entrepreneurship opportunities available through Government entities, state owned enterprises, banking sector and humanitarian organisation.*

The team has planned additional virtual and in-person employability trainings, expected to commence before the end of 2024, in other parts of Botswana (Kasane, Mahalapye, Tsabong, and Ghanzi). These sessions will cover topics such as effective interview preparation, enhancing online presence to boost employability, employment contract negotiation, and strategic job searching in the international labor market.

2.5.3 Foster an enabling environment for the Botswana National Youth Council (BNYC) to empower AYP as young leaders to participate meaningfully in national development at school, local, district and national levels.

- *BNYC is implementing skills enhancement programs, having reached 5,613 young people to date. These initiatives aim to promote employability, decent work, and improved well-being. During the board trainings held in Tsabong on the 7th of February, 2024, and Hukuntsi on April 27, 2023, a variety of important topics were covered for both in-school and out-of-school youth. These topics included mindset change, job readiness, starting a business, mental health, study skills, behavior change, and teenage pregnancy. A total of 330 young people participated in these trainings.*

For International Youth Day, held from the 7-12th August, 2023, both in-school and out-of-school youth were sensitized on opportunities available in green jobs and green financing. Young people were equipped with skills for business proposal writing and the use of recycled materials to make clothing. A total of 1,362 youth were reached in the areas of Masunga, Tati, Tshesebe, Kalakamati, and Tsamaya. Additionally, the Botswana National Youth Council conducted training on food processing and employability skills during World Youth Skills Day from the 26-27th July, 2023. A total of 416 youth were trained in the areas of Gumare, Nokaneng, Sepopa, Ikoga, and Etsha 13.

2.5.4 Accelerate and scale up the provision of on-going broad based up-to-date capacity building and continuous professional development (CPD) to foster entrepreneurship through partnerships with the business sector and tertiary education institutions.

- *The Ministry of Entrepreneurship, through its implementing agency, the Local Enterprise Authority (LEA), conducts Entrepreneurship Awareness Workshops (EAW) in senior secondary schools across the country, specifically targeting Form 5 students to raise awareness about entrepreneurship as an alternative career path. Similar workshops are also conducted in technical colleges. From March 2022 to date, 16,532 participants have benefited from the EAW. Additionally, to ensure that an entrepreneurial culture is fostered from a young age, the Ministry, in collaboration with key stakeholders, continues to advocate for the inclusion of entrepreneurship in the education curriculum, starting from pre-primary level.*

2.6 Policy/Programme Theme 6: Data, Monitoring and Evaluation



2.6.1 Develop comprehensive, timely, reliable, and disaggregated digital data on adolescent well-being to inform the M&E system.

- *The National Planning Commission (NPC) is assisting Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs) in developing Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Indicator Frameworks. These frameworks include clearly articulated indicators and detailed protocols, such as definitions and calculation methodologies, to specify the variables to be collected. A critical aspect of this process is aligning the strategic plans of implementing entities with the national development plans. This ensures that programs and projects deliberately addressing the Adolescent Wellbeing agenda are integrated into the National Development Plans (NDPs).*

3.0 Lessons Learned in the Implementation of the National Commitment for Adolescent Wellbeing in Botswana

3.1 Active Involvement of Adolescents and Young People: *One of the key lessons learned is the importance of actively involving adolescents and young people in every stage of planning, programming, implementation, and reporting. Their engagement ensures that the programs are relevant and effectively address their needs. Involving this demographic has led to more innovative solutions and greater buy-in from the target demographic. For example, youth-led sessions during the World AIDS Day commemoration revealed critical insights into their experiences with gender-based violence and the effectiveness of existing support systems.*

3.2 Data-Driven Decision Making: *Reliable and comprehensive data collection is fundamental in informing and guiding the implementation of the National Commitment. Botswana is committed to developing a comprehensive M&E Framework for the Commitment as well improve data collection to track its implementation. Other initiatives such as the development of the Education Management Information System (EMIS) will be pivotal in tracking the demographics and needs of school-going learners, including those with special needs. This data will enable targeted interventions as well as highlight areas requiring more attention.*

3.3 Multi-Sectoral Collaboration: *The success of the National Commitment hinges on robust multi-sectoral collaboration. Some of the strategies embedded in the Commitment are cross-cutting. Therefore, Ministries, civil society organizations, UN agencies, and community stakeholders need to work together to create a cohesive approach. This collaboration has been exemplified in initiatives like the school feeding program, where nutritional needs are addressed alongside educational objectives, and in the implementation of the Health Promoting Schools initiative, which combines health and education efforts.*

3.4 Community Engagement and Advocacy: *Community engagement has been a cornerstone of the National Commitment's implementation. Programs like the Parent-Child Communication Manual, developed in partnership with UNESCO and Women Against Rape (WAR), have empowered parents and caregivers with the skills to effectively communicate with their children*

about critical issues. This community-based approach has fostered a supportive environment for adolescents, enhancing their overall well-being.

3.5 Policy and Legislative Support: *Strong policy and legislative frameworks have supported the implementation of the National Commitment. The establishment of child-friendly policing SOPs, the reduction of speed limits around schools, and the development of inclusive educational policies are examples of how legislative measures have created a safer and more supportive environment for adolescents.*

3.6 Political Will: *A crucial lesson learned is the significant impact of strong political will on the success of the National Commitment for Adolescent Wellbeing in Botswana. The active spearheading of this commitment by the **His Excellency Dr Mokgweetsi Eric Keabetswe Masisi, President of the Republic of Botswana** has been instrumental in securing its acceptance and support from stakeholders across the country. The President's leadership has not only highlighted the importance of adolescent wellbeing but has also mobilized resources, fostered collaboration among various sectors, and ensured that the commitment remains a national priority. This high-level endorsement has facilitated the alignment of efforts from government ministries, civil society organizations, and local communities, creating a unified approach towards achieving the objectives of the National Commitment.*

3.7 Capacity Building and Training: *Building the capacity of all actors involved in implementing the strategies outlined in the National Commitment is essential for achieving the intended outcomes. For instance, investing in capacity building for both in-service and pre-service teachers has been crucial. Training workshops for 103 guidance and counselling and special education teachers, as well as 78 pre-service teachers on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE), have enhanced the ability of educators to address sensitive topics effectively. This training ensures that educators are well-equipped to support students' health and well-being comprehensively.*

**Please add a separate update for each commitment made. You can add more rows manually, or by clicking on the plus (+) sign that appears on the bottom-right, when the table is selected.*

3. If your government is presenting a Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) at the 2024 HLPF, **how have your announced national commitments been incorporated or otherwise contributed to your country's national review processes?**

Botswana is not presenting a VNR this year.